

By: Ellis

S.B. No. 1615

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1
2 relating to a pilot program for language interpreter services under
3 the medical assistance program.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

5 SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 32, Human Resources Code,
6 is amended by adding Section 32.061 to read as follows:

7 Sec. 32.061. LANGUAGE INTERPRETER SERVICES PILOT PROGRAM.

8 (a) The Health and Human Services Commission shall establish a
9 pilot program to provide recipients of medical assistance with oral
10 and written language interpreter services in accordance with
11 federal law and applicable publications of the federal Centers for
12 Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Office for Civil Rights of
13 the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

14 (b) The commission shall establish the pilot program
15 through local governmental entities in sites determined by the
16 commission, one of which must be the Harris County Hospital
17 District.

18 (c) The commission shall ensure that the pilot program is
19 financed using:

20 (1) money provided to the commission for purposes of
21 the program by participating local governmental entities to
22 maximize federal matching money under the medical assistance
23 program; and

24 (2) any corresponding federal matching money.

1 (d) Not later than January 1, 2005, the commission shall
2 evaluate the pilot program and report to the 79th Legislature on the
3 effectiveness of the program and the feasibility of expanding the
4 program statewide.

5 (e) This section expires September 1, 2005.

6 SECTION 2. If before implementing any provision of this Act
7 a state agency determines that a waiver or authorization from a
8 federal agency is necessary for implementation of that provision,
9 the agency affected by the provision shall request the waiver or
10 authorization and may delay implementing that provision until the
11 waiver or authorization is granted.

12 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
13 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
14 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
15 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
16 Act takes effect September 1, 2003.